

Attorney Docket No. DEJ1 1001-1

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method for use ~~with~~ in deriving user intent from a subject message, for use further with a network of agents each having a view of its own ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain, comprising the steps of a first one of said agents:

receiving from an upchain agent a query inquiring whether at least part of said subject message is within the ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain of said first agent;

querying at least one agent downchain of said first agent whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried agent's ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain;

responding to said upchain agent tentatively whether at least part of said subject message is within the ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain of said first agent, before said first agent receives all responses from said agents downchain of said first agent.

2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of, after said step of responding, said first agent responding further to said upchain agent whether at least part of said subject message is within the ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language

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interpretation domain of said first agent, after said first agent receives at least one additional response from said agents downchain of said first agent.

3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein said step of said first agent responding further occurs in response to a second query received by said first agent from said upchain agent inquiring whether at least part of said subject message is within the domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain of said first agent.

4. (original) A method according to claim 2, wherein said step of said first agent responding further occurs in response to said first agent receiving said at least one additional response.

5. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method for processing a subject message, by a network of agents including an originating agent and at least one agent downchain of said originating agent, each agent in said network having a view of its own domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain, comprising the steps of said originating agent:

querying at least one of the agents downchain of said originating agent in said network a first time, whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried agent's domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain, said first query including a first depth-of-search indication;

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resolving any conflicting responses from said queried agents to identify a prevailing one of said downchain agents to whom said subject message should be passed; and
instructing said prevailing agent to handle at least part of said subject message.

6. (original) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents, in response to said query:

determining whether a depth of said first agent exceeds said depth of search indication, and if so, disclaiming said subject message.

7. (currently amended) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents, in response to said query where a depth of said first agent does not exceed said depth of search indication:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain, and if so, returning a response to said originating agent claiming at least part of said message.

8. (currently amended) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents, in response to said query where a depth of said first agent does not exceed said depth of search indication:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain;

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and where said subject message is not within said first agent's local ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain but said first agent has further agents downchain of said first agent, querying at least one of said further agents whether the further agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the further agent's ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain.

Q² 9. (currently amended) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of, after said step of querying said agents downchain of said originating agent a first time, querying said agents downchain of said originating agent a second time whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried agent's ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain.

10. (original) A method according to claim 9, wherein said second query includes a second depth-of-search indication which exceeds said first depth-of-search indication.

11. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method for processing a subject message, by a network of agents including an originating agent and at least one agent downchain of said originating agent, each agent in said network having a view of its own ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain, comprising the steps of said originating agent:

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querying at least one of the agents downchain of said originating agent in said network a first time, whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried agent's ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain;

subsequently querying said queried agents a second time whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried agent's ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain;

resolving any conflicting responses from said queried agents to identify a prevailing one of said downchain agents to whom at least part of said subject message should be passed; and instructing said prevailing agent to handle at least part of said subject message.

12. (original) A method according to claim 11, wherein said prevailing agent is a community of agents.

13. (currently amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents, in response to one of said queries:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain;

and where at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local ~~domain of responsibility~~ natural language interpretation domain, returning a response to said originating agent claiming at least part of said subject message.

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14. (currently amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents, in response to one of said queries:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain;

and where said subject message is not within said first agent's local domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain and said first agent has no further downchain agents, returning a response to said originating agent disclaiming said subject message.

15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents, in response to one of said queries:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain;

and where said subject message is not within said first agent's local domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain but said first agent has further agents downchain of said first agent, querying at least one of said further agents whether the further agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the further agent's domain of responsibility natural language interpretation domain.

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16. (original) A method according to claim 11, wherein said step of querying a first time comprises the step of providing to each of said queried agents a first depth-of-search indication for said subject message,

and wherein said step of querying a second time comprises the step of providing to each of said queried agents a second depth-of-search indication for said subject message, said second depth-of-search indication indicating a deeper search than said first depth-of-search indication.

17. (currently amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a first one of said queried agents:

determining in response to said first query whether at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local domain-of-responsibility natural language interpretation domain;

where at least part of said subject message is within said first agent's local domain-of-responsibility natural language interpretation domain, returning a response to said originating agent claiming at least part of said subject message; and

where said subject message is not within said first agent's local domain-of-responsibility natural language interpretation domain but said first agent has further agents downchain of said first agent, querying in response to said second query at least one of said further agents whether the further agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the further agent's domain-of-responsibility natural language interpretation domain.

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Q² 18. (original) A method according to claim 17, further comprising the steps of
said first queried agent:
receiving a group of at least one response from said further agents downchain of said first
agent, in response to said step of querying said further agents; and
returning a response to said originating agent in response to said step of receiving.
